

REMARKS

In view of the preceding amendments and the comments which follow, and pursuant to 37 CFR §1.111, amendment and reconsideration of the Official Action of June 30, 2004 is respectfully requested by Applicants.

A Claims Listing dated 10/11/04 has been submitted herewith.

Claims 3, 6, 8, 10-13, and 15-17 have been canceled. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, and 14 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 14 remain currently pending.

Claim objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1-4 and 13 for having hyphens to the left of each variable. Applicants have removed the hyphens in the present amendment to overcome the objection.

Claims 6-11 and 15-16 are objected to because of improprieties involving multiple dependent claims. Applicants present amendment to the claims overcome the objection.

The Examiner's reconsideration of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph

Claims 5-11 and 14-16 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 5 and 14 use the term “preferably” which renders the claims indefinite. The present amendment has deleted “preferably” from the claim language.

Claims 6-11 and 15-16 omit essential steps, the steps amounting to a gap between the steps. By way of the present amendment, Applicants have corrected this problem.

The Examiner’s reconsideration of the rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 USC §102 (b)

The Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 USC §102 (b) as being anticipated by Asseline et al., (1992).

Claim 12 has been canceled by the present amendment, and thus the rejection is moot Applicants respectfully request the Examiner’s reconsideration.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner’s statement that claims 1-11 and 13-17 contain allowable subject matter that would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objections and the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as set forth in the instant action.

Applicants submit that their application is now in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration of their application in light of the above amendments and remarks is respectfully requested. Allowance of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 14 at an early date is earnestly solicited.

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The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 02-2958. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marilyn L. Amick", is written over a horizontal line.

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